

THE OMEN

is perennially behind schedule.

WEEKLY PRIORITIES

MONDAY 28

- Finish Omen
- Reading for L+M

TUESDAY 29

- Finish Omen
- AI group

WEDNESDAY 30

- Finish the fucking Omen!

THURSDAY 1

Send Omen to dupes.

After finishing it -

FRIDAY 2

Ideally distribute omen.
Or finish it.

SATURDAY 3

Adapt Omen
adapting

SUNDAY 4

- Start next Omen.

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For the second issue in the 33rd Volume of the Omen on May the first in the Year of our Lord 2009.

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Layout & Editing STAFF

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Victoria Quine	Is that math?
Tara Jacob	Clowns
Josh Gannon-Solomon	Some nonsense
Devon Ingraham-Adie	What
Elizabeth Boyle	Whatever

^ > omen.hampshire.edu

To Submit:

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, zergling, or email. Email your submissions to submittotheomen@gmail.com, or mail them to box 1394.

"I have gotten huge tits
out of my system!"

—David Axel Kurtz, on his proclivities

Front cover:

Evan Silberman

Back cover:

Omen staff

EDITORIAL

Protest

by Evan Silberman

Some of my friends, acquaintances, and enemies participated in some kind of a sit-in today. I'm not really clear on what all they were protesting, but I think it had something to do with a blog post Hexter made about wanting to sell the college to the Germans or the Japanese or something. The point being, I was exhorted by several different people to come along to this sit-in thing and, notionally, add my voice to those being raised in opposition to whatever it was that they were opposing.

My response was that I don't go to other people's protests. I didn't sign that non-satis.org petition thing either, because I don't sign petitions or sign my name to other people's letters. If there's one reason I actually believe in the Omen, it's because people sign their names to shit. I like saying things for myself when I have something to say. If I don't have a position to articulate, I don't bother to try. And I've never really had much of a position to articulate on all this "future of Hampshire" stuff.

I still don't, to be honest. I go here, I enjoy it, I will graduate in two years (hopefully). If I ever make any money, perhaps I will take it upon myself to remit some of it back to this ridiculous place.

In other news, the new improved Omen submission email address is

**submittotheomen
[at sign]
gmail
[period]
com**

so direct all complaints herewith to that address. The Omen is lurching into the Future! (The Future is now brought to you by the Past.)

Anyway, clearly everybody's all in a tizzy about everything, which for some reason provokes me into being pointlessly defensive for some reason, so I'm not really going to blaviate on further about this since it just annoys me for some reason. Maybe I'm just afraid.

Or maybe, just maybe, this fucking place will continue stumbling along haphazardly, an amalgam of competing and contradictory visions, serving nobody perfectly, but serving the people who really truly want to exploit it pretty well.

Just like, y'know, always.

Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Friday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

The Omen Haiku

Views in the Omen (5)

Reflect the opinions of (7)

David Axel Kurtz (5)

SECTION HATE

**Ralph Hexter
aka Captain Grammar**
by David Herr

I've never submitted to *The Omen*. I've barely read it, and must admit that I don't find it very amusing or informative. Here's an example why:

In Susana Sanchez's letter in this month's issue of *The Omen*, there are sentences such as, "Moreover, evaluations make students more responsible because students do not make a B- in their transcripts, but not an evaluations saying mind a B- in their transcripts, but not an evaluations saying how lazy and bad students they are."

This conjecture comes in a paragraph which claims we might change our evaluation to a "narrative" system. Someone should inform Ms. Sanchez that what we have is a system of NARRATIVE evaluations, as opposed to grade-based evaluations.

Regarding her other qualm with Hampshire, I haven't researched whether Follett (not "Follet," the name Ms. Sanchez used) owning our bookstore is a wise choice or not. Personally, I don't care. But with submissions like that, I'm inclined to support the opposition. At least I know Ralph Hexter understands fundamental rules of grammar. Also, Ms. Sanchez, Hampshire is a corporation and seeks to make money just like Follett. If you've ever compared the prices of our school store's products with those of chain stores, I think you'd find that Hampshire is not exactly competitive.

It seems to me that if this is the standard for the first year class, Hampshire's real concern should be how we can sell out fast enough to make sure we can support ourselves without having to rely on overenrollment.

Best,
Dave Herr



Reply to Mullens
by Nick Drozd

In the last issue of the *Omen*, Sarah Mullens provocatively asks "If we were Hampshire University in name as well as spirit, would we have Greek life?" I believe we will. In fact, I'm so enthusiastic about the idea that I say we institute a Greek system whether or not we become "Hampshire University" in name or in spirit.

"Sounds great," says the impatient reader, "but we need action, not hazy proposals! Put up or shut up!" Not one to back down from an open challenge, I hereby announce that I am establishing a new Hampshire fraternity: Delta Alpha Kappa.

Membership requirements in ΔAK will be strict. After all, not just any man can be a ΔAK man. Each postulant must exhibit no fewer than five pretentious affectations, at least two of which are needlessly anachronistic and at least one of which calls his heterosexuality into question. The ΔAK man, of course, must be a morally upstanding citizen. As such, he must display a marked Anglophilia and an irrational aversion to any intellectual movement originating after the First World War. The ΔAK man must also be academically accomplished: he must have taken no more than two actual college classes and must have produced, in the last decade, no fewer than eight thousand pages (12-font, TNR, double-spaced) of writing in any remotely academic field.

To prove his commitment, each pledge must, during Rush Week, spend twenty-four consecutive hours on an open stretch of lawn, doing nothing but drinking high-brow beer and pontificating to any passers-by on an irrelevant subject of his choice.

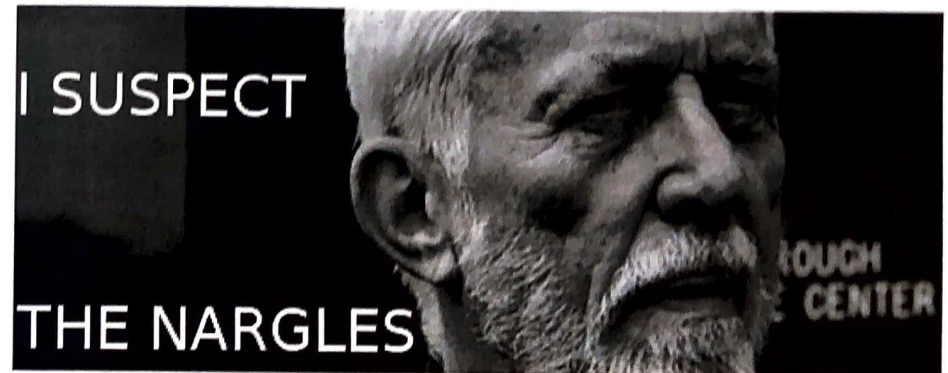
If we are indeed to become "Hampshire University" in name as well as spirit, then we certainly cannot continue to maintain Hampshire's long-standing reputation of degenerate turpitude. Delta Alpha Kappa, by producing men of integrity, caliber, family values, etc., will do much to rehabilitate the Hampshire image.

In closing, I encourage you, men of Hampshire, to apply to Delta Alpha Kappa. Please send all applications to the *Omen*.

*Openly non-heterosexual men will naturally be exempted from this condition.



This issue of the Omen features a professional white background.



some stupid comic thing
by David Axel Kurtz

SECTION SPEAK



Random Travel Thoughts Made Two Weeks After The Trip is Over by Madeleine Hahn

Words cannot fully express my deep-seated hatred for Logan Airport. Its confusing road signs and sinewy roads nearly ruined my night driving high from the past two hours.

I sit upright and stretch just as the stewardess – excuse me, flight attendant – walks by with a giant jug of water. I had already filled up my own reusable bottle back in the airport. When she offers me some water, I say, “Thank you, no,” and I muster a smile. She smiles back a little too widely as she hands me a filled plastic cup.

Despite the loud party (and an especially loud stereo) that had dashed any hopes of a few hours of shut-eye the night before, and despite having an entire bank of seats to myself, sleep on a plane is nearly impossible. I merely managed to lie still and keep my eyes shut, aware of every passing second for two hours without boring myself.

“The mother of all tailwinds” was the explanation a fellow traveler gave for touching down in Phoenix an hour ahead of schedule. I’m not convinced that that’s the case. Daylight Savings Time is messing up everything again.

I had high expectations for an airport as well-named as Sky Harbor International. Those expectations were not met. I’ll accept free wifi as a consolation prize.

Piece of advice for all you travelers out there: scheduling travel with a mere 25-minute layover is asking the powers that may be to make your first flight late. And screaming and cursing at the airport workers when you inevitably miss your connection isn’t going to make the plane come back to get you.

I did not dress to be stuck in Phoenix for two and a half hours. I would check the temperature, but, contrary to popular belief, I am not a masochist.

I really should learn not to be astounded and amazed when Fred says things like “I’m on omix.”

Short flights always seem longer than the long ones. With long flights, there’s less of that immediate desire to land – the knowledge that it will take a while allows me to sit back and enjoy the ride (read: tolerate doing nothing for five hours).

Ever since the first flight I can remember, I’ve always loved counting down to the moment I predict the plane will hit the tarmac. Since the first flight I can remember, this is the first time I was actually right.

When a Bay Area local offers the use of a car for the duration of a visit to the region, there should be no hesitation in answering “yes.”

Usually, being met with the question “How did you get in?” is not a good way to begin a conversation. Luckily for Fred, it got him admission into the conference, thus discovering a massive, but otherwise inaccessible, loophole in TechCrunch’s system.

I have been offered alcohol in public places since I was twelve or thirteen. Thus, the phrase “No thank you, I’m underage” has been programmed into my brain as an automatic response. Excuse me for letting it slip at a private gathering.

“There wasn’t a common word for it back then, but I was unintentionally and effectively vegetarian. I just... couldn’t bring myself to eat another living being. Wow, I’ve never confessed that to anyone before. And then, as I got older, I realized that God had put these animals for us because he loves us and wants us to enjoy life...” Smile and nod. Smile and nod. Smile. And. Nod.

What I had been talking about is now irrelevant. An anthropology professor from Stanford interrupts me with, “Are you French?” He then goes on to describe how the shape of my skull, my rounded forehead, my eyebrows, nose, eyes, chin and cheekbones are all indicative of Celtic Norman heritage. “Yes, I’m half French,” I respond. “I’m also half German.” “Your phenotypes all indicate ancestry in Celtic Normandy. Your mouth may be German, though.”

To say TechCrunch50 is a little crowded would be like saying that the Everglades are a little wet.

"It's not so much a source of revenue for us. It's more a public service to get guys laid." Count on Penn Jillette to keep it classy.

Resolution to take notes on each presentation. Made: Monday, 8:56 AM. Broken: Monday, 11:16 AM -- the moment I missed one company's presentation. Typical.

The first thing he said was his spiel on his open-source mood-detecting endeavor that he had given all morning. The second thing he said was, "Do you want an internship?"

When did "twitterverse" become a word?

It's highly disappointing that all of these startup companies depend on Facebook Connect to generate a network of users. Especially since Facebook Connect is so finicky in its usability.

100% vegan fine dining = dream come true. Not an oxymoron. Really. Shame it's all the way in San Francisco.

Mini genealogy adventures are fun. Alternately: You can learn all sorts of things your parents never told you when you read about them in the New York Times archives. At the very least, I did.

There really is a sort of selfish pride associated with knowing that you are the first to be "in the know."

The prospect of partying at a downtown club sounds pretty cool until you take into account the company you presently keep -- namely, middle-aged men looking for the "next big thing" on the Internet and who are content to get unbelievably wasted in the meantime. Fred, Jose and I stayed for an hour. The novelty wore off after the first fifteen minutes; the rest was out of courtesy.

I'm still trying to come up with a good excuse for excusing Minneapolis for Memphis. If you can, let me know.

The only reason we weren't stuck in Memphis for the night was that the gate for our next flight was directly across from the one from which we had just arrived. My seat partner very intelligently noted that I was the last one on the plane. He then proceeded to hog both of the armrests and nearly fell asleep on my shoulder.

Ever since I was really young I had been praised for being a good traveler. Perhaps this is why I had no tolerance for Tyler, who refused to be seated for our final descent.

Sitting on the tarmac for half an hour while waiting to be "escorted" to a gate cannot possibly be acceptable.

Rumor has it that there were considerations to rename Logan Airport in memory of Senator Ted Kennedy. It baffles me that the commonwealth of Massachusetts would threaten to bestow upon their beloved statesperson such an insult.

Open Letter from the Hampshire EMTs

We, the EMTs, are writing to express our feeling of a lack of support from Public Safety and the Hampshire College administration. Last year the budget for Hampshire College Emergency Medical Services (HCEMS) was cut by 75% (from \$160,000 to \$40,000 per year). While there have been many losses to the college in this last year of budget reductions, HCEMS has lost members of its program due to the inability to commit time without being paid. In the past month, HCEMS has been forced to reduce its coverage by 40 hours a week. We fear that Hampshire is at risk of losing HCEMS.

The administration (through the mouths of the Directors of Public Safety, Student Services and Health Services) has verbally stated support for HCEMS, but has not shown the necessary action to demonstrate their support. When HCEMS returned to service in Fall of 2008, it was without confirmed pay. When the merging of Public Safety occurred over the summer of 2008, it was without any warning to HCEMS. Public Safety made no attempt to contact the EMTs to learn about our program or to discuss some of the changes that would affect its structure in the coming school year. The student wages provided for EMTs, who contribute 12-48 hours of on-call time a week, and have completed a time and cost-consuming training in order to receive certification, were a surprise to the new administration, and were initially denied. EMTs had to fight—in the form of letters from students and parents—for pay that had been promised to them upon their hiring, the previous years. The pay that was secured was only guaranteed for the 2008-2009 academic year, during which HCEMS was asked to justify its existence, and design a new pay structure under which it might operate. This task was unfairly assigned, and largely unaided by the administration, to a group of students who have worked extremely hard to become EMTs and who have joined HCEMS in the interest of serving the Hampshire community. Our job is to provide emergency medical care to students, faculty and staff at Hampshire College; it is not to write budget proposals, to justify the

necessity of Emergency Medical Services on the Hampshire campus, and it is not to spend our academic time in meetings, defending our right to job security.

Despite our efforts to undertake these tasks, we feel that several of the reasons that EMTs are so important on our campus are routinely ignored or falsely refuted by Public Safety and the administration. EMTs on scene at calls have reported a typical window of 15-27 minutes for the arrival of an ambulance from Amherst Fire Department, an AFD, yet various offices on campus have not permitted us to publish this statistic in conjunction with the average response time of HCEMS, which is less than 2 minutes. Research in emergency medicine shows that emergency interventions performed within the first 10 minutes are far more effective than those performed later. This does not only apply to life saving procedures such as opening an airway, stopping major bleeding, or performing CPR, but also minor, non critical injuries. The healing time of a twisted ankle can be drastically reduced by wrapping, elevating, and icing the affected extremity within 15 minutes. Our primary ambulance provider, Amherst Fire, is understaffed and overextended, and the College is located 3 miles outside the area that AFD considers "adequately covered." Until Health Services is prepared to respond via bicycle to minor trauma, HCEMS remains the best option for a student suffering from minor trauma, especially that which would be worsened by movement. The director of Public Safety, Paul Ominsky, has stated that the officers are capable of adequately responding to any medical emergency on campus. This is despite the fact that often there is only one officer on call, making it impossible to adequately address any other emergency should another occur at the same time. Currently, only one of the officers employed by Public Safety and working at Hampshire is a certified EMT—Public Safety requires that all of its officers receive First Responder training, a difference of over 120 hours of training, and experience. We do not wish to discredit the ability of any officer from Public Safety, and on the contrary, we work very closely with the officers and

respect the work that they do. Public Safety is often required to secure a scene, perform crowd control, and respond to alarms/requests for assistance. Officers assist EMTs on call, and are indispensable in ensuring the safety of the EMTs as we provide patient care. To this end, officers have told EMTs that their jobs would be impossible without HCEMS.

When the EMTs brought these points and a budget proposal to Public Safety, Public Safety responded by giving HCEMS 60% of what we determined to be our minimal operating costs. Dawn Ellinwood, Director of Student Services, has pledged another 20% of our agreed upon budget, which is still around half of what we feel truly addresses the services we provide to the Hampshire community. We have tried to compromise, and have routinely been met with less than the financial support we need to operate 24/7. As a result, HCEMS has been forced to reduce its hours. We see this reduction as a huge loss to the campus, and a decision that does not address the inability of Health Services and Public Safety to provide EMERGENCY medical care to students on campus.

Many members of the Hampshire community have noticed the changes in EMT coverage. We, as members of HCEMS, are being asked to explain to our peers why we cannot work to provide emergency medical services to campus. This fall, HCEMS was not invited to work during orientation, and was turned away when we offered to volunteer our services in order to provide coverage for the first weekend of the fall semester. This mis-communication from Public Safety has made the EMTs feel expendable, disrespected, unappreciated. Many of us have been working as an EMT at Hampshire for three years, have worked hard and have

sacrificed tremendous amounts of time and energy to the program and to the community. EMTs are expected to adjust their behaviors and the images they present in order to maintain respect for our program.

We often hear positive feedback from students, faculty, staff and visitors, and would like to believe that Public Safety and the administration value our services as well. We are currently struggling to endure the changes that the merge in Public Safety has brought. We are struggling to maintain our program in an environment where we do not feel that we have the support necessary to continue in our jobs confidently. We are at a loss to understand why the college is allowing a program providing so many benefits to its community to flounder financially. We are frustrated by the lack of support that HCEMS has received from the college in our attempts to obtain funding and ensure our program's continued operation. We are strained and scared.

The Hampshire EMTs are torn by these feelings, and our concern over the safety and security of the campus. The ideals of Hampshire College are embodied by this unique organization; a solely student-run organization with its own practices, techniques, and skill sets which are handed down generation to generation. If an appropriate budget is not restored by next year, this campus will not have EMTs. Apparently the administration is content with this. They seem to be happy with less student run programs, less student responsibility, less student involvement, less transparency, more oversight, more off-campus consultations, and more power centralized to those disconnected with the actual workings of Hampshire. Students and faculty worry about the loss of what makes Hampshire unique. Right now, this campus is losing its EMTs.

The Hampshire EMTs are Mida McKenrick, Eyob Solomon, Jamie Moody, Erik Hoel, Sofya Peysakhovich, Maya Weiner Berkowitz, Cameron Kingsley, Deanna Snow, Mugs Myers, Kaitlin Cloud, Josh Fuller Deets, and Alexander Rasgon

The Data-Driven College by Marco Carmosino

Hampshire should continue to experiment with novel education strategies. We need to discuss how we can move ourselves forward as a radical institution.

To open this discussion, I propose that Hampshire attempt to use modern software to become a data driven college. This is a buzzphrase, and I apologize for that. I mean that we should use the technology expertise at our disposal to present the community with an accurate picture of student opinion.

Students at Hampshire have strong opinions about how effective educational tools are. With minimal participation from students, we can easily gather large amounts of data on-line.

At the very least, consider a "course reviews" website. I have often heard Hampshire professors say that they consider it part of their job to collect opinions about five-college classes and professors, so as to better advise their students. If we collected these reviews in one easily accessible place, on-line, it would be a very useful resource for students.

(Here David Axel Kurtz says: "Like how nobody knows about the STAR office, or LOGO, due to its cludgy, paper-bound archaism?" To which Marco responds: "What's the

STAR office?")

We can group students by their interests and what they find useful in learning. We could build profiles listing "what worked" and "what didn't work" for us, educationally. Imagine filling in a list of your educational interests, and then clicking a "recommendations" button. From the network, a collection of what students with your interests liked and didn't like about their college experience appears. To me, this sounds very useful. Note that this idea is stronger than a simple "course reviews" website: students would review educational activities in general. The upshot of reviewing "educational activities in general" is that this data could be used to make policy decisions at the college-wide

level. If students overwhelmingly dislike particular activities, they can be discontinued. Activities that students favor can receive more support. Thus, the college can converge on an effective educational environment for students.

People who are interested in seeing this thing happen should contact me. malc07@hampshire.edu.

2008 Crime Trends at Hampshire College by Stephen Morton

Last Monday, September 21st, an official Hampshire College Announcement went out titled "2009 Clery Security and Campus Safety Brochure Posted". In it was a link to a pdf report (http://www.hampshire.edu/shared_files/clery09-10.pdf) that is mostly full of boring, but it also includes the incidence report for crime at Hampshire for the past three years. Since few people probably bothered to read to read it, I thought I would summarize them here. These data cover 2006-2008 and cover Hampshire Campus proper only.

Over the past three years there have been no reported manslaughters, aggravated assaults, arsons, or non-forcible sex offenses. Forcible sex offenses have been trending downwards: in 2008 there was one reported forcible sex offense, while in 2007 there were eight and in 2006 there were 6. There were 13 incidences of burglary in 2008, down from 24 in 2007 and 84 in 2007. Conversely, there was one incidence of robbery in 2008 while there were none in 2007

and 2006.

In 2008 there were 6 drug arrests, up from zero in the preceding years. Drug referrals, on the other hand, dropped drastically in 2008: down to 22 from 82 in 2007 and 77 in 2006. This represents a policy shift, in my opinion. This is the period in which public safety shifted to being managed by Mount Holyoke. In the past Hampshire had a policy of strongly preferring to handle drug offenses through the internal referral process, so as to avoid the production of negative public statistics about the college. Our new public safety department does not seem to be following this policy, while simultaneously adopting a policy of much less aggressively pursuing drug offenses as a whole.

Liquor offenses follow a similar trend, with 11 referrals in 2008, down from 45 in 2007 and 53 in 2006. There were no liquor related arrests in the three years. There were also no weapons related arrests over this period, while there was a single weapons related referral in 2008 and none in the two years before that.

These dudes sure are high-minded by some guys with ugly beards

Non Satis

www.non-satis.org

24 September 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

As members of the Hampshire community, we were very concerned to hear of the drastic changes being considered for the College. We grew even more concerned when it was suggested that the Hampshire community would be given no vote, nor even any voice, in these changes.

We are passionate in our commitment to the preservation of narrative evaluations, to self-designed curricula, to project-based learning, to interdisciplinary learning, to student representation at all levels of government, and to student input in all changes which will affect them and their educations.

We consider these ideals to be fair, progressive, sustainable, pedagogically sound, and true to the spirit and mission of Hampshire College.

Therefore we took it upon ourselves to consult the community, to determine if other people felt as we did.

Upon consultation, we discovered that many of us are so committed to these ideals, that if the College was to divest itself of them, then we would divest ourselves from the College. If these ideals are betrayed, we should never donate money to this college, never participate in fundraising drives, never give to the Alumni Fund, and never in any other way support the College. For in such a case, this College would not be Hampshire any more.

If the College washes its hands of its commitment to its founding ideals, then we shall wash our hands of the College.

As of the writing of this letter, the pledge of divestment has collected 793 signatures. All of us who signed this pledge hope that the College shall remain true to its ideals, that our pledge shall not have to be acted upon.

We wish that all involved members of the Hampshire community, from students to the Administration, from prospective students to alums, should be made aware of this pledge and the number of those who have signed it. We hope that they shall bare this in mind in all their future

decision-making.

Yes, the College is facing difficult times. Therefore it is necessary, now more than ever, that the College be administered at all levels by those who are committed to maintaining it and all the characteristics which define it, which separate it from other institutions, which let it define its market niche, which, in short, make it Hampshire.

If there are any persons currently employed by Hampshire College who are not so committed to its mission, it is our wish that they step aside immediately, so that their positions might be filled by those who are so committed.

If there are any persons currently employed by the College or who think they are incapable of keeping the College both alive and Hampshire concurrently, it is our wish that they step aside immediately, so that their positions might be filled by those who are so capable.

It is our wish that those who administer the College should sign their own pledge, one which asserts their commitment to these ideals and to the spirit of Hampshire College as we know it.

And it is our hope that, in times to come, the Hampshire community shall be able to have a voice, and a vote, without having to take it by such drastic measures as this.

We believe that if these things come to pass, then it shall not be necessary for us to act upon our pledge. We believe that these things shall help keep the College strong, keep it progressive, and keep it true to itself and its ideals.

We hope that that you will share our concerns, and help us in our work to keep Hampshire true to its founding ideals.

Thank you very much for your time.

Non Satis:

-David Axel Kurtz

div III

dak06@

-Adam Krellenstein

div II

agk07@

-Ian McEwen

div I

ihm08@

Division III Dichotomy by Jordan Persson

As you've probably learned by now, Hampshire's teachings focus heavily on certain concepts and buzzwords. If you didn't come here with a career path in mind, you may well be screwed. As such, your Division III is extremely specific, be it on diasporas or social justice. While some students are unfortunate enough to be without a focus until their third year, I had a revelation the other night that told me exactly how I could use these Hampshire-centric keywords to shape my life.

I'll do a Div III on Practical Dichotomy and become a professional dichotomist when I graduate. I'll start small, helping miners cut rock, then I'll move up to demolishing condemned buildings. Eventually, though, I'll get bored and turn to a life of crime, separating old ladies from their purses and cracking open bank vaults. I may become overconfident and get caught, but I'll just make a dichotomy of my cell wall and escape.

After that, I'll wander the countryside until that fateful day when I meet a beautiful pasticher. We'll fall in love and mix our lives together. The sex will be great, too - I'll dichotomize her legs and we'll create a pastiche therein. Everything will be wonderful at first, but our differences may slowly prove to be too great. One night, over an argument over a joint checking account, she'll look up at me with tear-filled eyes and ask, "Are you TRYING to put a rift between us?"

And sadly,

I'll break my gaze away from hers

And reply,

"It's what I do."

Alumni also possess high horses by Jeff Barone

Dear President Hexter,

As an alumnus, I find the content of the missive posted to your official blog (found at <http://ralphhexter.blog.hampshire.edu/?p=18>) deeply disturbing. I think you have lost sight of the very things that make Hampshire function, if indeed you ever had that understanding in the first place; with respect, I believe that this latest is merely another step in a lengthy journey your administration has been making since its inception away from the things that make Hampshire an institution worthy of its students.

As a tour guide in the Admissions Office, I frequently cited the small class sizes and lack of graduate students as major things in Hampshire's favor. Small classes meant flexible classes, and student initiative played a major role in every course I took at Hampshire. Without graduate students, undergrads got the opportunity to participate in and run very high-level research. But that pales in comparison to

some of the other frighteningly short-sided positions you're laying out here.

Hampshire's entire purpose, its founding mission, was to provide a place where enterprising students who wanted to be the masters of their own destinies could explore their own paths. Small student to professor ratios, a small student body, a dedication to the concept of liberal arts, narrative and substantive methods of evaluation - these are all in service to that concept. The fact that you are cavalierly dismissing all of these vital things as expendable is nothing short of appalling.

Hampshire was far from perfect when I was there. It suffered from an institutionalized culture of entitlement; students were promised a voice in the administration, but that voice was constantly marginalized and sidelined in favor of sweeping decisions made by a tiny handful of staff members. There was a terrible shortage of teachers in several areas that

were proven, year after year, to be enormously popular with students. I and most every student I knew during my time there had to compromise on what we wanted to study - not because our courses of study weren't academically feasible, but because finding committee members among Hampshire's terribly short-staffed art, film and writing departments was mostly a matter of luck.

These enormous flaws in the system were balanced by a system that did, ultimately, value individual expression and flexibility. Hampshire was always a college that favored the individual, that encouraged its students to stand up for themselves, that rewarded persistence and imaginative solutions to problems. These are all traits that are highly valuable in the real world, and none of them are traits that are encouraged in a traditional system of grades and majors, or in environments where the individual is so outnumbered that learning and achievement begin to resemble factory assembly lines.

I am firmly of the conviction that this "refounding" of the college is the most profound misstep in the history of the institution. You would take away Hampshire's greatest strengths - its individuality, its flexibility, its personal nature, its commitment - sometimes dishonored, but never forgotten - to the power and fulfillment of the student on the student's terms; you would have Hampshire abandon these noble, rare values, in favor of becoming another subpar, overcrowded, bureaucratic clone of the universities Hampshire

students universally have chosen not to attend. You would abandon these great strengths entirely, leaving the college only with its greatest weaknesses - the overcrowded classes that became increasingly common over my years there, the progressively more serious insufficiency of Hampshire's small number of full professors to meet the needs of an increasingly crowded student body, the woefully overlooked facilities.

Hampshire isn't perfect. What it has is a unique set of strengths no other college can boast. Don't throw those rare, treasured strengths - strengths which continue to attract far more students than Hampshire is equipped to admit, strengths which have led to massive increases in the number of applications over the last ten years - don't throw those away in the name of turning a personal, individual, and above all rare environment into yet another middle-of-the-road college with little to commend itself beyond a commitment to buzzwords and an admission to its own disinterest in the voice of its students.

Stop trying to turn Hampshire College into a watered down UMass for rich kids. Listen to your students, past, present and future. This is not what we want.

Yours sincerely,
Jeff Barone
F08



Innovate or Perish by Adam Krellenstein

I understand that times are tough for a young college like Hampshire College, which does not yet have a stable body of alumni to help keep it financially secure. I understand that in such times as we find ourselves, changes to our institution must be made to keep our budget balanced and our college alive. But we must not, in responding to external stimuli such as the economic downturn, forget what is far more important than our struggle for existence. We must remember why exist, and what we are struggling to defend in the first place.

In response to rising financial aid costs this year, our

school's current administration is suggesting, if not outright proposing, we seriously reform, if not get rid of many of the aspects of the Hampshire experience which "define" Hampshire College. Our administration is also planning to continue a failed practice of hiring outside consultants to tell Hampshire how to spend its money. Both of these are foolish in the extreme.

It is easy enough to forget our mission and begin to think about Hampshire as just another college, as outsiders are inclined to do. After all, what is an «experimenting» college anyway? Indeed, it is much harder to be constantly ques-

tioning and innovating, especially when it feels like getting anything done at CampHamp is akin to herding cats. Complacency, appeasement and congregation are all encouraged by an immense amount of peer-pressure. In difficult times, we may be tempted to give up what makes us distinct. As Ralph Hexter suggests in his Vision of Hampshire College, «We may or may not continue with other elements that have distinguished our curriculum and pedagogy, for example, narrative evaluations.» To Ralph Hexter, I say, «Just say 'no'. It's not worth it, and if you think it through, you'll realize that getting rid of what distinguishes our curriculum and pedagogy is getting rid of the very reason for our existence.

Hampshire College, for its entire history, has been forging trails in higher education. It was the first American college to divest from apartheid South Africa. It was one of the first of many colleges in America to become SAT optional; its «design-your-own-concentration» was once a very radical academic program; and we offered the first undergraduate degree in Frisbee.

Over the past few years, however, as all radical bodies are inclined to do, Hampshire College has begun to slip down the slippery slope toward normalcy. Our current first-year curriculum is more academically conservative than that of Amherst College. Let us recognise that we have been heading in the wrong direction, in many respects, and we must, if we are to fulfil our mission, restart our tradition of commitment to academic progress? We are failing to respond to crises with any ingenuity or creativity... we are stagnating as an institution: it is no wonder we are having marketing troubles. They will get worse, if we give up completely.

John Gardner, Cabinet Secretary of Hampshire College quoted in *The Making of a College* (1965), said, «[I do not believe that the colleges and universities will go under because they are carrying heavy burdens. If they deteriorate it will be because they lacked the morale, the internal coherence, and the adaptiveness to meet the requirements of the future it will be because in the moment of their greatest suc-

cess they could not pull themselves together to face new challenges.»

I agree whole-heartedly, and am saddened to see President Hexter and our administration in general succumbing to these heavy burdens, decidedly because they are not encouraging our college to be «adaptive» in any real fashion. In the President's writings and speeches, especially those of the past few days but including *The Making of a College 2.x series* (2006-), there is a disconcerting dearth of actual suggestions for ways that Hampshire College can continue to innovate and experiment... and thereby maintain its tiny market niche in the face of financial strife. Rather, there are repetitive insinuations that we all must sacrifice our very impetus for being.

I see in Ralph's mind, and in Mark Spiro's e-mail, a conflation of what are more realistically competing goals. There is a dishonesty in our administration's rhetoric. One moment, they are exhorting that the «quality of campus life» is paramount. The next, they reveal the real reason for their actions: «money». Let's be honest, Follett Corporation is on campus because of the latter, not the former. When I asked Mark Spiro to elaborate on how Follett Corporation would improve the student experience, he did not answer. Indeed, while Spiro assured us that Follett Corporation would continue to sell «popular inventory», we have received no assurance they would sell the unpopular stuff, and that's the stuff that matters.

I ask our community and our administration to respond to these hard times not with a complexion of defeat, but with one of resilience and determination to fulfil our institutional mission at whatever cost. This means saving money not by cutting the programs which make us unique, such as Lemelson and the Farm Center, but by trying «new» things. We must adapt in alternative ways, not conventional ones. In the ever-more-competitive market of higher education, it is our distinctiveness that keeps us kicking.



SECTION LIES

The Rescue Mermaid by David Axel Kurtz

It was Hampshire Halloween and I was bored.

These kind of premade parties always get to me. They are crippled by a sense that they should be something more, more than the conversations and activities that might be had by a group of Hampsters getting all together. At Halloween, most everyone seems to feel that they have to take part only in the activities provided. To do otherwise would be a betrayal of the specialness of the event! Therefore, in the pursuit of *more*, it ends up being far less even than your average Hampshire day.

It doesn't much help that Hampshire Halloween has become a tragic parody of what it once was. It used to be a symbol of the counterculture. Strange drugs were done, rituals performed, music made, Bacchus praised in a thousand different ways. Now it's as if the Walt Disney Company has taken over. The daytime gives you cotton candy, inflatable jumping cages, a dunk tank - in short, an adolescent's birthday party. At night people stumble about in a drunken haze. Just like on a normal Hampshire week-end night. Only moreso.

And I feel guilty if I don't go out and take advantage of the Great Event. And I feel guilty if I don't participate in the activities provided. But if I do go out I feel guilty for getting nothing done, and if I do participate I feel, not guilty, but just plain bored.

This particular Hampshire Halloween, as usual, I settled upon an unhappy medium. I wandered about the campus, looking for fun, and brooded.

I had been walking for about two hours. Girls I had class with had bumped into me, kissed my cheek, and went off to vomit. Fellows whose final projects I had assisted took off their shirts and stood about, admiring themselves in the absence of those to admire them. People yelled and ran around. People fell down and usually got back up.

Hampshire's is not a large campus. In four hours of dyspeptic peripateticism I had covered all the grounds, many times over. I was now making the rounds through the freshman dorm, wherein I lived, looking to find people I knew in particularly comic states of dismantling. Thusfar this sort of schanderfreudian curiosity had been, if not particularly productive, at least not hard to satisfy.

I was walking through the basement of the building, a long corridor with the occasional twist or turn. It was echoing empty. The lights flickered hollow and soulless. But one place is much as another, when you are wandering, and lost as well.

The corridor was so selfsame from length to length, and the lights that filled it so surgical in their suffusion, that I saw something on the floor when I was still thirty feet away from it. As I drew nearer I could tell easily what it was that broke the shape of my walk. It was a cigarette.

I came to it and bent down to pick it up. It was unsmoked, unbroken, truly in better shape than most cigarettes are by the time you've smoked the first half of the pack. It was a Marlboro Light, which had never been my brand, even when I allowed myself the occasional indulgence. Still I pocketed it. I was sure I could find some nic-fitting young dirty who would be more than willing to suck it down.

I walked on, and turned a corner, and there on the ground just before me was another cigarette. I bent down to examine it. Same brand, same pristine condition. I pocketed it.

I walked ten paces and came to another such specimen. Ten paces or so again, and another. Then five paces, then four, than three. Soon I had half a pack in my pocket. I felt like the hipster Hansel and Gretel.

Then, just up ahead, I found the pack. Well, not all of it. There are twenty cigarettes in an

American pack and I had found only nineteen all told. Yes, I am the sort of fellow who counts these things. I carefully maneuvered the cigs I had found into the pack, and kept walking.

But then I turned the corner, and found the twentieth cigarette.

It was unlit, though not for lack of trying. The cigarette was in the hand of a girl I didn't know, not more than eighteen and not unlikely younger. She held a lighter in her other hand, but had not been able to connect the two. Very glad, I thought, as smoking indoors would have had the fire department there inside of five minutes.

That was the second thought which occurred to me. The first was, *Holy shit.*

The girl who was so loose with her smokes was passed out cold on the floor. She must have been trying to smoke for the last hundred paces or so, constantly drawing out a cigarette from the pack, constantly losing hold of it before she could get it lit, trying again while stumbling off down the halls. For there she lay, unconscious, in the middle of the corridor.

Okay, maybe 'lay' does not quite describe her position of repose. The side of her face was on the linoleum. Her arms were stretched out past her head. Her knees were on the floor. She was ten feet in front of me, completely comatose, her ass in the air like she was presenting it for inspection.

I should also mention a modern phenomenon known as Mean Girls Syndrome. So named for the movie in which it was first brought to prominent discussion, it tells how Halloween has ceased to be an opportunity for young people to build creative costumes and live their decorous fantasies amongst likeminded peers. Basically now it's just a way for people to dress up as total skanks. Halloween, like Drag Ball, gives people the cover to dress up as slutty as possible. Whether they are covering themselves for the perceptions of others, or their own self-perceptions, I couldn't begin to guess.

This girl was no exception. If she was dressed in homage to a character from fact or fancy, it was a porn star. She was wearing knee-high plaid socks, high heels, a shirt which the Victorians would not have called a negligee, and her hair was done up in pigtails. Also I should mention that, in that position, her miniskirt was mini enough that I had I tripped on the slick linoleum I could very well have landed mid-coitus.

Her scarlet thong notwithstanding.
Holy shit.

I looked down at her for a minute, maybe, wondering what to do. "Hello?" I called, twice, thrice, but got no answer. So I bent down and took the twentieth cigarette from her hand and added it to my pack. Then I called the EMTs.

I pushed her ass to the floor, then sat down and waited. Of course, Hampshire Halloween is not exactly a rest night for our local paramedics. Now they even bring in med techs from off-campus to assist. For the moment, however, they had enlisted our interns to act as a first line of response. When I called in the difficulty, the first person to show up was, by chance, my intern.

When I recognized her, that is. She was nineteen years old, a few inches over six feet, and a student of marine biology and aquaculture. As I write this I am only now realizing how her costume was an homage to her academic discipline. At the time, and for the few years thereafter, my thoughts on the subject were less analytically inclined.

From the waist down she seemed to have no legs. Her entire lower body was encased in scales, terminating in a tail like a whale might have. From the waist up she was completely nude. She was wearing blue body paint up to her hairline and held a trident in her right hand. She towered above me even as she shuffled forward on her flipper. She did not look pleased.

One of the clearest memories of my collegiate existence is of her bending down next to the World's Worst Smoker, stroking her hand with the hand not holding the trident, and whispering sweet nothings to her while waiting for the medics to arrive.

I stood there, and waited, just to be sure. I felt somewhat that Ass-In-Air Girl was my responsibility. I had found her, after all. So I waited until I could see the blinking red lights of the ambulance coming down the hall from the door. Then I left the two of them and made myself scarce.

My intern caught up with me a few minutes later, just down the hall, where I was hanging out with my back to the wall and heavy lids over my eyes. I was brooding. What are the odds? But strangely enough, I wasn't unhappy.

In fact, I felt rather good about myself. My great problem with parties, especially those like Hampshire Halloween, is that nobody does anything inter-

esting, anything productive. They are dull affairs, and I am not willing to drink until they became entertaining (or until I become so reduced in my abilities that things like smoking, or staying conscious, are challenging enough to be interesting). But here I had found, quite accidentally, a way to make the evening productive. I had done something to help someone. I had helped. For a few minutes, my night had been worthwhile.

Of course, all I'd really done was enable a person to safely indulge in the kind of behavior that I felt wasn't good enough for me. But, you know, when it's because of you that a little girl isn't taken advantage of, or something, or anything, then suddenly these things are less important.

My intern came and found me. "Thanks for calling us," she said. She looked at me a little skeptically. Like she couldn't quite believe I hadn't dragged the girl off behind something. What can I say, I give off a sketchy vibe.

"Don't mention it," I said. "Glad I could be of service."

Her curiosity was no little increased by the fact that I seemed to really look glad about it.

Weirdo that I am.

"Have a good night," she said, and started to shuffle off, when I thought of something. I called her name, she turned, and when I was able to raise my eyes to hers - it doesn't help

that her bare breasts were at my eye level to begin with! - I pulled the pack of cigarettes from my pocket.

"Found these lying around," I said. "Want 'em?"

"Really?"

I grinned. "Keep me from smoking 'em myself."

She looked at me just a second more, then took the pack from me. "Hey... thanks."

Least I could do.

She went back to make her rounds, a woman who had managed to look like a mermaid and do good in the world all at the same time. I wandered around for a few more hours, but finding nothing to interest me on land, nor any more stories worth a visit from a creature of the sea, I went back to my room, and went to bed.

I keep wandering around Hampshire each Halloween, but I haven't had any experiences like that one. Every year I come damn near to spending the evening off-campus. But on the offchance I'm able to stumble across something that makes the evening worthwhile - or hell, maybe even think of something myself to make it more than the ugly orgy it otherwise is - I have to keep going back. That's my philosophy of Hampshire Halloween. And of Hampshire, I suppose. And college. And maybe life.

Or maybe I should just start drinking.

Stuff I've Dreamt

by Tatiana Soutar

Anti-teenager barriers (involving fire)

Milk Spiders: A Study (Div III)

Flying ship piloted by giants (escaping on tiny boats)

Claymation devil in a red yellow green clay tornado

Bad CGI Alien Mothership

Slasher scenario involving claymation brown butterfly

Bouncing on huge leaves near a fjord

Tsunami eating up everything but Mexico

Time machine with Samuel L. Jackson

Borg in my backyard

Several things involving Patrick Stewart

Gravity changes direction, I'm wearing stripes

2D world

I've had a couple nightmares involving professors. One of which also involved spreadsheets (printed in rainbow ink).



Comix

by Athena Currier



Things to Save:

The Farm - 18 votes
 Lemelson - 15
 Evaluations - 15
 Academic Distictiveness - 10
 Small Classes - 3
 OPRA - 3
 Josh Mosh - 3
 Five Colleges - 2
 Financial Aid - 2
 Student Programs/Funding - 2
 EMTS - 2
 NS - 2
 Greenhouse - 2
 Arts - 1
 Paul Dickson - 1
 Commitees - 1
 Post Office - 1
 Library - 1
 The Gallery - 1
 Orientation - 1
 Rae-Ann Wentworth - 1
 The Climax - 1
 The Reader - 1
 Hampshire College Zine Collective - 1
 Boudering Cave - 1
 Multisport Track - 1
 Mailboxes - 1
 HTML - 1
 The Three Armchairs that were recently purchased for Mod 89 - 1

Things to Cut:

Administration Budget - 9 votes
 Expensive/Frivolous Purchases - 7
 Ralph Hexter/His Budget - 4
 Josh's Hair - 4
 The New Pub Safety - 3
 Beauracracy - 3
 Not Lemelson - 3
 SAGA - 2
 The Hampstore - 2
 Div I - 2
 Fireproof/Cancer Furniture - 2
 One Card - 2
 Things related to Ralph's Horses - 2
 Consider volunteers over paid employees - 2
 Stupid Teachers - 1
 Utilities - 1
 Fear and Conservatism - 1
 Athletics - 1
 Health Services - 1
 Student Group Funding - 1
 Hampshire University - 1
 The Crap - 1
 The Number of Students - 1
 Outside Consultants - 1
 The Multi-Sport - 1
 Hiring Freeze - 1
 Changes to Admission Office - 1
 Tuition - 1
 Payment for Orientation Leaders - 1
 Sprinklers - 1
 Encourage Student Groups to be more self-sustaining - 1
 The Omen - 1
 Financial Aid to the Omen's editors - 1
 Financial Aid to the Omen's contributors, supporters, and readers - 1
 Sheep (but keep other animals) - 1
 CS - 1
 Library - 1
 Enfield - 1
 Autumn Leaves - 1
 Shitty Dance Parties - 1
 Those shitty new keyboards in the library that have the slash key on the far side of the shift key - 1